§62.3 Definition of terms.

Certain terms as used in this subchapter are defined as follows:

(a) *Aid to Navigation.* The term aid to navigation means any device external to a vessel or aircraft intended to assist a navigator to determine position or safe course, or to warn of dangers or obstructions to navigation.

(b) *Commerce.* The term commerce, in addition to general, national and international trade and commerce of the United States, includes trade and travel by seasonal passenger craft (marine and air), yachts, houseboats, fishing boats, motor boats, and other craft, whether or not operated for hire or profit.

(c) *Commandant.* The term Commandant means the Commandant of the Coast Guard.

(d) *District Commander.* The term District Commander means the commander of a Coast Guard District. Coast Guard Districts are listed in Part 3 of this chapter.

(e) *Corps of Engineers.* The term Corps of Engineers means the Corps of Engineers, Department of the Army.

(f) *Person.* The term person imparts both singular or plural, as the case demands, and includes any Federal Agency, State, Territory, possession, or public subdivision thereof, the District of Columbia, and any corporation, company, association, club, or other instrumentality.

(g) *Navigable waters of the United States.* The term navigable waters of the United States is defined in §2.36(a) of this chapter.

[CGD 86–031, 52 FR 42640, Nov. 6, 1987, as amended by USCG–2001–9044, 68 FR 42601, July 18, 2003]

§62.5 Marking of marine parades and regattas.

(a) The Coast Guard may establish aids to navigation to mark marine parades and regattas which are regulated by the Coast Guard for the purpose of protecting life and property, or to assist in the observance and enforcement of special regulations. For marine parade and regatta regulations, see Part 100 of this chapter.

(b) [Reserved]

Subpart B—The U.S. Aids to Navigation System

§62.21 General.

(a) The navigable waters of the United States and non-navigable State waters after December 31, 2003, are marked to assist navigation using the U.S. Aids to Navigation System, a system consistent with the International Association of Lighthouse Authorities (IALA) Maritime Buoyage System. The IALA Maritime Buoyage System is followed by most of the world's maritime nations and will improve maritime safety by encouraging conformity in buoyage systems worldwide. IALA buoyage is divided into two regions made up of Region A and Region B. All navigable waters of the United States follow IALA Region B, except U.S. possessions west of the International Date Line and south of 10 degrees north latitude, which follow IALA Region A. Lateral aids to navigation in Region A vary from those described throughout this Subpart. Non-lateral aids to navigation are the same as those used in Region B. See §62.25. Appropriate nautical charts and publications should be consulted to determine whether the Region A or Region B marking schemes are in effect for a given area.

(b) The U.S. Aids to Navigation System is designed for use with nautical charts. Nautical charts portray the physical features of the marine environment, including soundings and other submarine features, landmarks, and other aids necessary for the proper navigation of a vessel. This crucial information cannot be obtained from other sources, even ones such as topographic maps, aeronautical charts, or atlases. The exact meaning of an aid to navigation may not be clear to the mariner unless the appropriate chart is consulted, as the chart illustrates the relationship of the individual aid to navigation to channel limits, obstructions, hazards to navigation, and to the total aids to navigation system.

(c) The navigator should maintain and consult suitable publications and instruments for navigation depending on the vessel's requirements. This shipboard equipment is separate from the aids to navigation system, but is often

essential to its use. The following publications are available from the U.S. Government to assist the navigator:

(1) The Light List, published by the Coast Guard and available through the Government Printing Office or authorized sales agents, lists federal and private aids to navigation. It includes all major Federal aids to navigation and those private aids to navigation, which have been deemed to be important to general navigation, and includes a physical description of these aids and their locations.

(2) The United States Coast Pilot, published by the National Ocean Service and available through that agency or authorized nautical chart sales agents, supplements the information shown on nautical charts. Subjects such as local navigation regulations, channel and anchorage peculiarities, dangers, climatalogical data, routes, and port facilities are covered.

(3) Local Notices to Mariners are published by local Coast Guard District Commanders. Persons may be placed on the mailing list to receive local Notices by contacting the Aids to Navigation and Waterway Management Branch of the appropriate Coast Guard District. These notices pass information affecting navigation safety. Changes to aids to navigation, reported dangers, scheduled construction or other disruptions, chart corrections and similar useful marine information is made available through this publication.

(4) The Notice to Mariners is a national publication, similar to the Local Notice to Mariners, published by the National Imagery and Mapping Agency. The notice may be obtained free of charge from commercial maritime sources and, upon request, to Defense Logistics Agency, Defense Supply Center Richmond, ATTN: JNB, 8000 Jefferson Davis Highway, Richmond, VA 23297–5100 or FAX 804–279–6510, ATTN: Accounts Manager, RMF. A letter of justification should be included in the request. This publication provides ocean going vessels significant information on national and international navigation and safety.

(5) The mariner should also listen to Coast Guard Broadcast Notices to Mariners. These broadcasts update the Local Notice to Mariners with more timely information. Mariners should monitor VHF–FM channel 16 to locate Coast Guard Marine Information Broadcasts.

(d) The U.S. Aids to Navigation System is primarily a lateral system which employs a simple arrangement of colors, shapes, numbers, and light characteristics to mark the limits of navigable routes. This lateral system is supplemented by nonlateral aids to navigation where appropriate.

(e) Generally, lateral aids to navigation indicate on which side of a vessel an aid to navigation should be passed when the vessel is proceeding in the Conventional Direction of Buoyage. Normally, the Conventional Direction of Buoyage is the direction in which a vessel enters navigable channels from seaward and proceeds towards the head of navigation. In the absence of a route leading from seaward, the Conventional Direction of Buoyage generally follows a clockwise direction around land masses. For example, proceeding southerly along the Atlantic Coast, from Florida to Texas along the Gulf Coast, and northerly along the Pacific Coast are considered as proceeding in the Conventional Direction of Buoyage. In some instances, this direction must be arbitrarily assigned. Where doubt exists, the mariner should consult charts and other nautical publications.

(f) Although aids to navigation are maintained to a reasonable degree of reliability, the rigors of the marine environment and various equipment failures do cause discrepancies on occasion.

(g) The Coast Guard makes reasonable efforts to inform the navigator of known discrepancies, and to correct them within a reasonable period of time, depending upon resources available. Occasionally, a temporary aid to navigation, which provides different but similar service, is deployed until permanent repairs can be made to the original aid. Notification of such temporary changes is made through the notice to mariners system.

(h) Mariners should exercise caution when using private aids to navigation because private aids are often established to serve the needs of specific users rather than general navigation

and their purpose may not be obvious to casual users; and, discrepancies to private aids are often detected, reported, and corrected less promptly than discrepancies to Coast Guard aids to navigation.

[CGD 86–031, 52 FR 42640, Nov. 6, 1987, as amended by CGD 88–018, 54 FR 48608, Nov. 24, 1989; CGD 97–018, 63 FR 33573, June 19, 1998; USCG–2001–9286, 66 FR 33640, June 25, 2001]

§62.23 Beacons and buoys.

(a) Aids to navigation are placed on shore or on marine sites to assist a navigator to determine his position or safe course. They may mark limits of navigable channels, or warn of dangers or obstructions to navigation. The primary components of the U.S. Aids to Navigation System are beacons and buoys.

(b) Beacons are aids to navigation structures which are permanently fixed to the earth's surface. They range from large lighthouses to small, single-pile structures and may be located on land or in the water. Lighted beacons are called lights; unlighted beacons are called daybeacons.

(1) Beacons exhibit a daymark. For small structures these are colored geometric shapes which make an aid to navigation readily visible and easily identifiable against background conditions. Generally, the daymark conveys to the mariner, during daylight hours, the same significance as does the aid's light or reflector at night. The daymark of large lighthouses and towers, however, consists of the structure itself. As a result, these daymarks do not infer lateral significance.

(2) Vessels should not pass beacons close aboard due to the danger of collision with rip-rap or structure foundations, or the obstruction or danger that the aid marks.

(c) Buoys are floating aids to navigation used extensively throughout U.S. waters. They are moored to the seabed by sinkers with chain or other moorings of various lengths.

(1) The daymark of a buoy is the color and shape of the buoy and, if so equipped, of the topmark.

(i) Can buoys have a cylindrical shape.

(ii) Nun buoys have a tapered, conical shape.

(iii) Pillar buoys have a wide cylindrical base supporting a narrower superstructure. They may be surmounted by colored shapes called topmarks.

(iv) Spherical buoys have a round shape.

(2) Mariners attempting to pass a buoy close aboard risk collision with a yawing buoy, the buoy's mooring, or with the obstruction which the buoy marks.

(3) Mariners should not rely on buoys alone for determining their positions due to factors limiting their reliability. Prudent mariners will use bearings or angles from beacons or other landmarks, soundings, and various methods of electronic navigation. Buoys vary in reliability because:

(i) Buoy positions represented on nautical charts are approximate positions only, due to practical limitations in positioning and maintaining buoys and their sinkers in precise geographical locations.

(ii) Buoy moorings vary in length. The mooring lengths define a "watch circle", and buoys can be expected to move within this circle. Actual watch circles do not coincide with the dots or circles representing them on charts.

(iii) Buoy positions are normally verified during periodic maintenance visits. Between visits, environmental conditions, including atmospheric and sea conditions, and seabed slope and composition, may shift buoys off their charted positions. Also buoys may be dragged off station, sunk, or capsized by a collision with a vessel.

[CGD 86–031, 52 FR 42640, Nov. 6, 1987; CGD 86–031, 52 FR 46351, Dec. 5, 1987]

§62.25 Lateral marks.

(a) Lateral marks define the port and starboard sides of a route to be followed. They may be either beacons or buoys.

(b) Sidemarks are lateral marks which advise the mariner to stay to one side of the mark. Their most frequent use is to mark the sides of channels; however, they may be used individually to mark obstructions outside of clearly defined channels. Sidemarks are not always placed directly on a channel edge and may be positioned outside the channel as indicated on charts and nautical publications.